

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 OMB-01
/099 W

-----129375 081321Z /44

P R 081133Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9457
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KABUL 6393

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PINS, PGOV, US, UR, AF
SUBJECT: TASS ARTICLE CHARGING U.S. WITH ASSISTING SUBVERSION IN
AFGHANISTAN

REF: A. STATE 195658 (NOTAL); B. KABUL 6279 (NOTAL);
C. MOSCOW 18017 (NOTAL)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER DOST DISCLAIMED ANY
RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE TASS ALLEGATION ACCUSING THE U.S.
OF PROVIDING FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO GROUPS WHO ARE ATTEMPTING
TO SUBVERT THE PRESENT AFGHAN REGIME. IF THE AFGHAN GOVERN-
MENT HAD ANY EVIDENCE OF SUCH ACTIVITIES, WHICH IT DOES
NOT, THE MATTER WOULD BE DISCUSSED WITH THE U.S. DIRECTLY.
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WHEN THE ISSUE WAS TAKEN UP WITH AMBASSADOR PUZANOV, HE
WAS RATHER DEFENSIVE IN HIS RESPONSE AND APPEARED UNINFORMED
ABOUT THE TASS ITEM. END SUMMARY

2. ON AUGUST 3, I CALLED ON SHAH MOHAMMAD DOST, DEPUTY
FOREIGN MINISTER FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS, TO DISCUSS THE
AUGUST 1 TASS ARTICLE (REFTEL C) WHICH ALLEGED THAT THE

U.S., CHINA, AND SAUDI ARABIA HAVE BEEN PROMOTING SUBVERSION AGAINST THE REGIME OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN (DRA). I WAS ACCOMPANIED BY THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR.

3. I GAVE DOST A COPY OF EXCERPTS OF THE TASS ITEM TO READ (PARAGRAPHS TWO AND THREE OF REFTEL C). HE GAVE NO SIGN OF HAVING SEEN IT BEFORE. REMINDING DOST THAT I HAD ALREADY MADE IT CLEAR TO PRIME MINISTER TARAKI, FOREIGN MINISTER AMIN, AND HIMSELF THAT THE USG DOES NOT INTEND TO INTERVENE IN AFGHAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS, I RE-EMPHASIZED THIS POLICY AND STATED THAT IT APPLIES TO ANY TYPE OF INTERFERENCE, INCLUDING THE ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT OF SUBVERSION FROM THE OUTSIDE. I DESCRIBED THE TASS ITEM AS MALICIOUS AND TOTALLY WITHOUT FOUNDATION, AND CONJECTURED THAT ITS PURPOSE COULD ONLY BE TO CREATE TENSION IN THE U.S.- AFGHAN BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. I INFORMED DOST THAT I INTENDED TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER FURTHER WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR PUZANOV.

4. DOST REPLIED THAT THE DRA LEADERSHIP REMEMBERED THE ASSURANCES OF UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM, ASSISTANT SECRETARY SAUNDERS, AND MYSELF CONCERNING THE USG'S INTENTION NOT TO INTERFERE IN AFGHANISTAN'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS. HE DISCLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE TASS PIECE, OBSERVING THAT IF THE DRA HAD EVIDENCE OF SUCH CONFIDENTIAL

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INTERFERENCE, IT WOULD HAVE DISCUSSED IT DIRECTLY WITH US. DOST SAW THIS ESSENTIALLY AS A PROBLEM BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE USSR. HE TOLD ME THAT HE WOULD BRIEF FOREIGN MINISTER AMIN ABOUT THE SUBSTANCE OF OUR DISCUSSION, AND AGREED WHEN I REQUESTED THAT PRIME MINISTER TARAKI BE INFORMED AS WELL.

5. DURING AN AUGUST 7 RETURN COURTESY CALL BY SOVIET AMBASSADOR ALEXANDER PUZANOV, I PROVIDED HIM A COPY OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE TASS ARTICLE. I STRESSED TO HIM THAT THE STORY HAD NO BASIS IN FACT, AND THAT IT COULD ONLY BE INTERPRETED AS A MALICIOUS EFFORT DESIGNED TO UNDERMINE GOOD AFGHAN-U.S. RELATIONS. I STRESSED THAT IT IS U.S. POLICY NOT TO INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF AFGHANISTAN, AND THAT I HOPED OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD PURSUE A SIMILAR POLICY.

6. PUZANOV DID NOT RESPOND AGGRESSIVELY, AND DID NOT CHASTISE EITHER THE SAUDIS OR THE CHINESE. HE APPEARED DEFENSIVE AND UNINFORMED, AND CLAIMED HE HAD NOT YET SEEN THE ARTICLE, ALTHOUGH HE PROMISED TO STUDY IT CAREFULLY WHEN THE APPROPRIATE SOVIET NEWSPAPERS ARRIVED

FROM MOSCOW. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE IS A RESIDENT TASS CORRESPONDENT IN KABUL, BUT ASSERTED THAT HE IS NOT UNDER THE EMBASSY'S CONTROL OR SUPERVISION. PUZANOV COMMENTED THAT OVERALL SOVIET POLICY TOWARD AFGHANISTAN IS CONSISTENT AND CLEAR, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF PUSHTUNISTAN, AND THAT THE USSR ALSO DESIRES AN INDEPENDENT AND STABLE AFGHANISTAN. WHEN I ASKED HOW HE WOULD FURTHER CHARACTERIZE THE "CONSISTENT" SOVIET POSITION ON THE PUSHTUNISTAN QUESTION, HE REPLIED THAT THIS MATTER, AS OTHERS, SHOULD BE SETTLED THROUGH PEACEFUL NEGOTIATIONS.

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P R 081133Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KABUL 6393

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

7. IN REPLY TO MY QUERY AS TO WHETHER ANY NEW MILITARY ASSISTANCE AGREEMENTS WERE IN THE OFFING WITH AFGHANISTAN, PUZANOV SAID THAT NO NEW BILATERAL AGREEMENT IS UNDER CONSIDERATION. THE USSR WOULD PREFER NOT TO ENTER INTO SUCH AN AGREEMENT, AND THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT HAS NOT REQUESTED SUCH AN AGREEMENT. MOSCOW SIMPLY WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE THE RELATIONSHIP WHICH WAS WORKED

OUT ORIGINALLY UNDER FORMER KING ZAHED AND CONTINUED BY
PRESIDENT DAOUD. IN THIS REGARD, PUZANOV SAID THERE
WAS A CONTINUATION OF THE SALE OF ARMS AND OTHER SUPPLIES,
THE TRAINING OF AFGHAN MILITARY PERSONNEL, AND THE
ASSIGNMENT OF SOVIET ADVISERS TO THE AFGHAN MILITARY.
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HE DID NOT CITE SPECIFIC FIGURES ON HOW MANY SOVIET
ADVISERS ARE CURRENTLY IN AFGHANISTAN.
8. COMMENT: DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER DOST GAVE NO
INDICATION OF BEING CONCERNED BY THE TASS ALLEGATION.
PUZANOV'S DESCRIPTION OF THE SOVIET POSITION ON
PUSHTUNISTAN SUGGESTS THAT IT IS TILTED TOWARD THE
AFGHAN POSITION AND PERMITS THE SOVIETS TO MANIPULATE
THE ISSUE, IF IT SO CHOOSES, FOR ITS OWN PURPOSES. THE
RESPONSE ON THE ABSENCE OF ANY INTENT TO CONCLUDE A
NEW MILITARY ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT SUGGESTS THAT THE
SOVIETS ARE SATISFIED THAT THEY HAVE THE FLEXIBILITY
THEY NEED UNDER EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS TO SELL ARMS AND
TO PROVIDE TRAINING AND MILITARY ADVISERS.
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